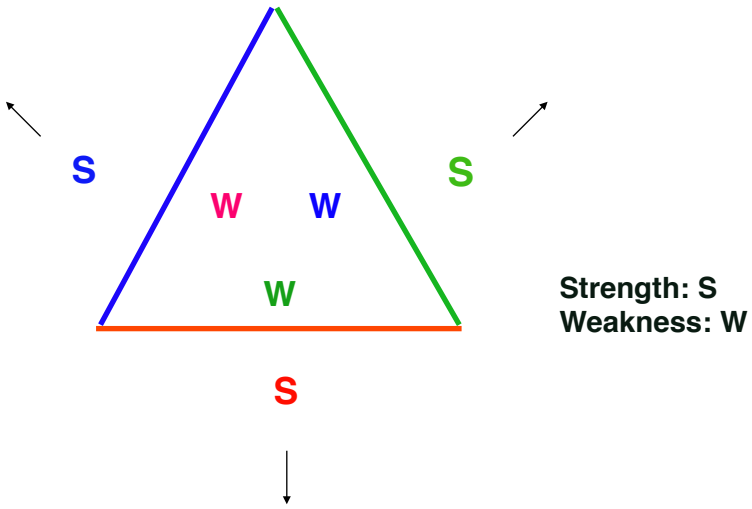
Statecraft Treatise: Shepherding Strength and Redeeming Weakness —The Benefit of Dynamic Specialization Over Standardization.



In the above diagram, each person (represented by colored line) 's unique strength protects against another's weakness. Green's weakness is blues strength, red's weakness is green's strength and blue's strength is green's weakness. As they cooperate back to back, they do not need to fret or spend time and resources trying to patch up their fears and weaknesses, but can instead progress in different directions with their respective talents and strengths.

No person is an island ; no one is self sufficient ; all have their strengths, fears and weaknesses. Standardization and conformity foolishly demands strength in weakness and bravery in cowardice. Instead of planting doubly on fertile soil, it demands that deserts be irrigated so that they can grow their "fair share". Society is reciprocity, and the community finds stability in diverse function under clear and united direction.

Every person has their own peculiar fears, particular talents and inherent weaknesses. Given such a situation, the correct way is to refrain from insisting that they overcome their fears or improve their weaknesses, but instead to identify their strengths and talents and hone those strengths exclusively.

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However, current methods of standardized notions and public schooling simply wastes resources by enforcing conformity, which means that inherent strengths receive less attention while weaknesses are superficially patched up at great expense of time, money and peace of mind. Likewise, cutting people loose to find their own way in the world upon maturity is the same as letting fertile fields sit idle and grow weeds.

Doing so is inefficient and ineffective. Therefore, on the contrary, society should hone individualism under the web of collectivism. The latter shields the flanks of the former, allowing the former to advance unencumbered. Now you may say that doing so is self contradictory, but so is fire and water, and it is fire and water that makes the steam which creates electric power. People need to work together towards prosperity or else there would be discontent and factional strife. Competition solves nothing since it just allows resentments and enmity to simmer until it grows into quarrels and conflicts.

Thus, a country becomes strong when it allows different people's particular strengths to shine, when it lets one person's strength to cover for another's fear and weakness so that each can focus only on honing their strength to greatness. In this case, nobody's back is exposed and progress may advance on multiple fronts.

Moreover, according to Mencius:

20. Mencius replied, 'They are only men of education (i.e. Sages who meditate), who, without a certain livelihood, are able to maintain a fixed heart. As to the people, if they have not a certain livelihood, it follows that they will not have a fixed heart. And if they have not a fixed heart, there is nothing which they will not do, in the way of self-abandonment, of moral deflection, of depravity, and of wild license. When they thus have been involved in crime, to follow them up and punish them;-- this is to entrap the people. How can such a thing as entrapping the people be done under the rule of a benevolent man?

21. 'Therefore an intelligent ruler will regulate the livelihood of the people, so as to make sure that, for those above them, they shall have sufficient wherewith to serve their parents, and, for those below them,

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sufficient wherewith to support their wives and children; that in good years they shall always be abundantly satisfied, and that in bad years they shall escape the danger of perishing. After this he may urge them, and they will proceed to what is good, for in this case the people will follow after it with ease.

22. '……..Notwithstanding good years, their lives are continually embittered, and, in bad years, they do not escape perishing. In such circumstances they only try to save themselves from death, and are afraid they will not succeed. What leisure have they to cultivate propriety and righteousness?'

Thus, the greatest problem today is that our education system is wasteful and often alienates while the economy is not structured in a way that easily gives suitable opportunities to suitably inclined people. Thus, no one can have a tranquil and still heart as they are not promised a livelihood they could be secure and happy in. We are doing the equivalent of leaving fertile land idle while embracing scavenging.

As mentioned at the beginning, society is reciprocity. Each person needs to cooperate with others in order to survive and thrive. **The brave fight so the scholarly can study, the scholarly thinks so the decisive can act wisely; the sturdy labor so the lofty can create, the lofty creates so the whole world may derive value and bliss from beauty.** If each can shine in their posts and receive due dignity/gratitude and provision, then the society or country would be doubly strong, as each person can focus on their strengths knowing that others will cover for their weakness and fears.

To each his own,
Be it skill or comfort zone,
Be it weakness
Or greatness,
So cover peculiar fears
By shepherding diverse strengths.

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